NUMB. CVII.

The Prompter.

——*In Faith*, Dear GRUB, *you have been much to blame!*
You muſt needs learn, my Wag! *to mend* THESE FAULTS;
Defect of Manners, *want of* Government;
Pride, Haughtineſs, Opinion, *and* Diſdain.

Shakeſpear's Henry the 4th.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18. 1735.

TO be *Scurrilous*, in *Argument*, is a Quality, of the ſame *cowardly* Tendency, as to *ſcratch*, and *bite*, in *Boxing*. ----- They are, *Both*, Demonſtrations of a *conſcious Deficiency* in the *Boy*, who would revenge himſelf, by a baſe *Animoſity*, upon what has mortified him, in *fair Combat*.

WHAT I ſaid, in ſome foregoing Papers, with Regard to the PHILOSOPHER'S PRAYER, was in *due*, and decent Reſentment of that *virulent Waſpiſhneſs*, wherewith the FLESH of ſome Men, upon controverſial Occaſions, ſo far over-actuates the SPIRIT, as to leave no Traces of *Humility*, in the EXAMPLES, of thoſe *Reverend Warriors*, by whoſe PRECEPTS it is *quarter'd upon* LAYMEN.

IF there is any thing of *Truth*, in a Complaint, under which the *Pulpits* have *groan'd*, for ſome Years paſt, it is the more to be lamented, that Their Incumbents attack not the *Infidelity*, they make War upon, with the Artillery of *Meekneſs* and *Reaſon*.--- Had the APOSTLES debated, with that Heat of *Impatience*, which diſtinguiſhes ſo many of their SUCCESSORS, One of the Greateſt of their Great Maſter's *Miracles* wou'd have been, *that they made* ANY CONVERTS. It is hard, to *believe* a Reaſoner, or, even to ſuppoſe, that *He believes Himſelf*, when we find him embitter'd by the moſt *flagitious* Effects of thoſe Paſſions, *againſt* which he aſſumes a *Commiſſion*, for Preaching.

THERE is a *Power*, in GENTLENESS that enters, Every where, like AIR: at once, the *ſofteſt*, and the *ſtrongeſt* Prevailer, in Nature.--- We *give up* our Opinions, with Pleaſure, where the *Temper* of our Opponent leaves us *Calm* enough, to compare, and conſider, Both Sides of the Queſtion: But, we *maintain* 'em, with *Pride*, where they are *invaded*, with *Anger*, and, often, *yield not to the Reaſon*, becauſe there is a *Perſonal Contempt*, which we find *due* to the *Reaſoner*.

THE Gentleman, who is ſaid to be Author of the GRUB-STREET JOURNAL, is a Member of the *Tribe*, and an Example of the *Temper*, above-mention'd. ---It ſeems Impoſſible, to the peeviſh Diſpoſition of this *Eccleſiaſtical Wreſtler*, to disjoin the Ideas of a Diſputant's *Perſon*, and his *Argument*. ---- The Leaſt *Oppoſition* of *Sentiment*, He miſtakes, for a purpos'd *Indignity:* and, throwing off, at once, both the *Clerk*, and the *Gentleman*, works up his Paſſions into a *Tempeſt*; and, in the *Duſt*, which it raiſes, loſes *Sight*, and *Purſuit*, of the ARGUMENT.

THERE cannot be invented an *Exerciſe*, more conducive to the *Health* of our *Minds*, than the Labour, the Conteſt, the TRIED *Strength*, of our *Underſtandings*. — Nor can there be a more *amiably-uſeful* Amuſement, than to accuſtom ourſelves to *hear*, and to *bear*, OPPOSITION; till we are able, by Degrees, to ſhake off, and deſpiſe, That *Senſibility*; which is ſo *Sore*, at firſt Trial, under every ſlight Bruiſe, of *Contradiction*.

FOR my Part, --- far from thinking it *Witty*, to treat the CLERGY *indecently*, I think it abſolutely *Inexcuſable*. --- Excluſive of the *Rights* they aſſert, from their Claims by REVELATION, It is enough, that They are Men, ſet apart for the *Worſhip* of GOD: Men, whoſe Study it is, to *explain* him, in his WORKS: and, whoſe Buſineſs, to form the Reſt of Mankind to the *Duties* of *Virtue*, by the rational Ballance of *Practical Honeſty*. — Perſons, who generouſly devote themſelves to ſo *reverenc'd*, ſo *endearing*, a SERVICE of the *Publick*, cou'd not *miſs* the RESPECT, Due to *Lives thus diſtinguiſh'd*; even tho' They were not quite ſo *able*, as they know, and declare themſelves to be, to *produce* thoſe CREDENTIALS, which add the Weight of *Authority*, to what were, *elſe*, but *Attraction*.

BARRING, therefore, what may tend to any *Irreverence* of the *Prieſthood*, I ſee not, *Why* Reſtraints ſhou'd be laid on *Free-thinking*. And, much leſs can I ſee any Reaſon, why (ſince the Clergy are ſo

able

able to defend the *Truth* of their *Principles*) they ſhou'd expreſs ſuch *Impatience*, when *weaker Men* than Themſelves preſume to attack them! — Rather, certainly, they ſhou'd TRIUMPH; conſcious of the happy Occaſion, to *enlighten, undeceive*, and *convert*, miſguided Enemies. In *vain*, (to ſay Truth) wou'd they POSSESS, ſuch a *Strength*, as they confeſs to be in them, if it were not for theſe *Opportunities* of *Exerting* it. — *Why*, then, are they inflamed into *Anger*? — Why do they not *argue*, with That *Smile*, of *attentive Humanity*, which wou'd diſcover their *Senſe* of *Security*? — Who *knows*, what erroneous Concluſions may be drawn from their contrary Practice? Since It is commonly obſerv'd, that Men grow not *Enrag'd*, but in Proportion to their becoming *Deſperate*.

As to the *Vicar* of GRUB-STREET, in particular, I am afraid, the Fault lies in his *Blood*. — He abounds in the *Choleric Extreme*, from an *Extravaſation* of his *Bilious Juices*. — Hence, thoſe *Corroſive Salts*, in his EPIGRAMS! — Volatiliz'd, by the inflammatory Rapidity of his *Spirits*, Theſe Offenſive *Effluvia* ſtream out, at his *Pores*, and infect (like a *Plague*, in the *Levant*) even the innocent *Paper* he writes on. — Hence, the *delicate* Acuteneſs of thoſe Remarks, wherewith he, Weekly, *elucidates* the Hiſtorical Sections of his *Journal*. — Hence, that profound *Erudition*, to which we owe ſuch *important* Diſcoveries of *Barbariſms*, unauthentically, *Latiniz-ed!* and of *Words*, with *unclaſſical* QUANTITY! — Hence, thoſe *cutting* Animadverſions on, and Diſtinctions of, PUFFS, which have blown, like a *Trade-wind*, in the *Face* of poor Mr. *Orator Henley*, till they now make his *Eyes water*, every Time He looks into the *Journal!* — Hence, that Excommunicative *Diſcharge of Church-Wit*, which has pierc'd, through the Fame of the Living *Mr. Budgel*, to beat down the Memory of the Dead *Doctor Tindall!*

BUT, the PROMPTER's happy OBSCURITY, might have protected him, one would have hoped, from the Reſentment of this irreſiſtible *Aimer*: Since the *firſt Paper, of That Name*, which had the Honour to *ſtray into his Hands*, was, it ſeems, after about *a Hundred* of them had been publiſh'd! — How much to be *envied*, is this *fortunate Elevation!* which can place a Man *out* of *the Hearing*, of Cenſures, it muſt ruffle him to *meet with!* — Now, a *Curſe* on that malevolent *Planet*, that came croſs the *Line* of his *Motion*, and knock'd him down *Low* enough, to ſtraggle into the *Orb* of the PROMPTER! who had, elſe, *eſcap'd* the *Shot* of a murdering EPIGRAM, or two; and This Neceſſity of *returning* the Compliment, by

EPIGRAM, the Firſt.

In Honour of the Grub-ſtreet *Journal.*

CINNA (*ſays* Martial) *wiſh'd, to have it* thought,
He but SEEM'D Poor; — *and* ſpent not, *what he* ought.
Twas a mere Bite! — *not, only* POOR ESTEEM'd:
He WAS, INDEED, *the* Sad, Poor Dog, *he* SEEM'D!
So, that BLACK SNAIL, *that darkens* Grub-ſtreet's *Fame*,
Would joke away *the* TRUTH, *behind the* NAME:
But, never weigh'd, how Dull *the* Jeſt *wou'd ſound*,
To be CALL'D Grub-ſtreet — *and, be* Grub-ſtreet FOUND!

I know not whoſe *Epigrams* may be thought to have moſt *Wit*: But, I am ſure, It will be Eaſy to ſee, whoſe have moſt *Malice*. — Yet, whatever Defects Induſtrious *Grub* may labour under, as to *One* of theſe Qualities, I am for charging the Fault on its true, and only, Occaſion. — Every Reader of that Paper will remember what frequent Mention is made, in it, of PEGASUS: But, wou'd it have enter'd into the *Thoughts of Man*, that this *proud Palfrey* of the *Muſes*, had been turn'd into a DRAY-HORSE! — See the melancholy Fact, in another, *Due*, EPIGRAM, containing *a ſhort and true Account, of* WHO, *firſt, enroll'd, and, then, left in the Lurch*, this MILITANT CHURCH-CHAMPION, of GRUB-STREET.

EPIGRAM the Second.

OF *Merit Deſerted.*

1.

P—E, *who*, oft, overflows, *both with* WIT, *and with* SPLEEN,
Felt the Want of a Dung-Cart, *to keep himſelf* Clean:
So, He furniſh'd a Prieſt, *with a* CARRIAGE, *ding, dong:*
And, made him his Drayman, *to drive it along.*

2.

Then, as oft as the MUSE's Satirical ITCH,
For the Poet's Diſcharge, *lent his Vengeance a* Switch;
Hey-gee-ho *was the Word* — "*Take it*, Parſon, *away*—
And, the reverenc'd EXCREMENT *loaded the* Dray.

3.

Sir Gravity, *charm'd with the* Call, *for his* Freight,
Betwixt Load, *and* Load, *found it tedious, to* wait:
And, Himſelf *having* Nothing, *to keep up the Trade*,
Told his Maſter, with Tears, how his Cuſtom decay'd,
"What *is* once, in two Months? — *Now 'twould make the Wheels* creak,
"*Wou'd* YOU find wherewithal, *to load* once *a* WEEK!

4.

Stand aloof, *anſwer'd* P—e, — *Such a Trade as* You *drive*,
May be needful: — *but, welcome to no Man alive*,
Tho' I love to dreſs light, *I'm too* neat, *in my Cloaths*,
To let a Tom T—d-Man, live under my Noſe.

Deſunt Cætera.

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